
The German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, is beginning talks with the pro-business Free Democrats on forming a centre-right coalition. Mrs Merkel's CDU/CSU bloc is back in power after a sweeping victory in Sunday's general election. Jonny Dymond reports:

There are some long days of talks to come, but **the shape** of Germany's new government is clear.

Angela Merkel can **dump** the centre-left Social Democrats she has **uncomfortably cohabited with** for four years, and instead invite the pro-business Free Democrats to join her as a junior partner. Together they will have **a comfortable majority** in parliament. Ms Merkel described the result as amazing.

Her opposite number, Social Democrat Frank-Walter Steinmeier had a terrible night, his party **battered down to just** 22.5% of the vote. It was, he said, **a bitter defeat**.

Jonny Dymond, BBC News, Berlin

Vocabulary and definitions

there are some long days of talks to come	the discussions to form a coalition government will go on for a while but it's not known (as indicated by the word some) exactly how much time and effort they will take
the shape	here, the essence, the overall political character
dump	get rid of
uncomfortably cohabited with	here, had no other choice but to work with
a comfortable majority	here, many more seats
her opposite number	here, her political rival who is head of another political party
battered down to just	suffering great disappointment after receiving only
a bitter defeat	when someone loses in a contest heavily and/or against their expectations

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